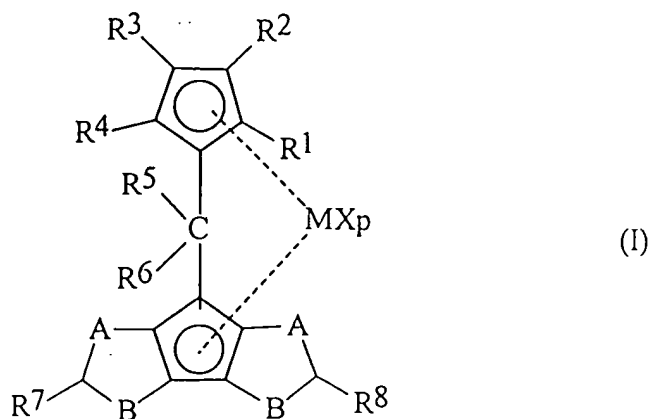


IN THE CLAIMS:

Please rewrite claims 1, 25 and 26 as shown below in the detailed listing of all claims which are, or were, in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A process for the preparation of polymers of ethylene comprising the polymerization reaction of ethylene and optionally one or more olefins in the presence of a catalyst comprising the product obtained by contacting:

(A) a metallocene compound of formula (I):



wherein

the rings containing A and B have a double bond in the allowed position having an aromatic character;

A and B are selected from sulfur (S), oxygen (O) or CR<sup>9</sup>, R<sup>9</sup> being hydrogen, a C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-cycloalkyl, C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkenyl, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-aryl, C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkylaryl, or C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-arylalkyl radical, optionally containing heteroatoms belonging to groups 13 or 15-17 of the Periodic Table of the Elements, with the proviso that if A is S or O, B is CR<sup>9</sup> or if B is S or O, A is CR<sup>9</sup>, and A and B cannot simultaneously be CR<sup>9</sup>;

R<sup>1</sup>, R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>4</sup>, R<sup>5</sup>, R<sup>6</sup>, R<sup>7</sup>, and R<sup>8</sup> which may be the same as or different from each other, are hydrogen, a C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-cycloalkyl, C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkenyl, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-aryl, C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkylaryl, or C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-arylalkyl radical, optionally containing heteroatoms belonging to groups 13 or 15-17 of the Periodic Table of the Elements, and at least two adjacent substituents R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>3</sup> and R<sup>4</sup>, or R<sup>5</sup> and R<sup>6</sup> can form a ring comprising 4 to 8 atoms, ~~and where at least one of R<sup>1</sup>, R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>4</sup>, R<sup>7</sup> and R<sup>8</sup> is not hydrogen;~~

M is an atom of a transition metal selected from group 3, 4, 5, 6 or the lanthanide or actinide groups in the Periodic Table of the Elements,

X, which may be the same as or different from each other, is hydrogen, halogen atom, a R<sup>10</sup>, OR<sup>10</sup>, OSO<sub>2</sub>CF<sub>3</sub>, OCOR<sup>10</sup>, SR<sup>10</sup>, NR<sup>10</sup><sub>2</sub> or PR<sup>10</sup><sub>2</sub> group, wherein the substituents R<sup>10</sup> are hydrogen, a

$C_1-C_{20}$ -alkyl,  $C_3-C_{20}$ -cycloalkyl,  $C_2-C_{20}$ -alkenyl,  $C_6-C_{20}$ -aryl,  $C_7-C_{20}$ -alkylaryl, or  $C_7-C_{20}$ -arylalkyl radical, optionally containing heteroatoms belonging to groups 13 or 15-17 of the Periodic Table of the Elements;

p is an integer of from 1 to 3, being equal to the oxidation state of the metal M minus 2;

with the proviso that at least one of  $R^7$  and  $R^8$  is not hydrogen;

and

(B) at least one member selected from the group consisting of an alumoxane and a compound of formula  $D^+E^-$ , wherein  $D^+$  is a Brønsted acid, which gives a proton and reacts irreversibly with a substituent X of the metallocene of formula (I) and  $E^-$  is a compatible anion, which stabilizes the active catalytic species originating from the reaction of the two compounds, and which is removed by an olefinic monomer.

2. (Previously amended) The process according to claim 1, wherein in the metallocene compound of formula (I) the transition metal M is selected from the group consisting of titanium, zirconium and hafnium.

3. (Previously amended) The process according to claim 1, wherein in the metallocene compound of formula (I) the X substituents are chlorine atoms or methyl groups.

4. (Previously amended) The process according to claim 1, wherein in the metallocene compound of formula (I) A and B are sulfur or a CH group, and if A is a CH group, B is sulfur, or if B is a CH group, A is sulfur,  $R^5$  and  $R^6$  are  $C_1$ - $C_{20}$ -alkyl groups, and  $R^7$  is equal to  $R^8$ .

5. (Previously amended) The process according to claim 4, where  $R^1$ ,  $R^3$  and  $R^4$  are hydrogen,  $R^5$  and  $R^6$  are methyl,  $R^2$  is  $C_1$ - $C_{20}$ -alkyl groups and  $R^7$  and  $R^8$  are methyl groups.

6. (Previously amended) The process according to claim 1, wherein said alumoxane is obtained by contacting water with an organo-aluminium compound of formula  $H_jAlR^{12}_{3-j}$  or  $H_jAl_2R^{12}_{6-j}$ , where  $R^{12}$  substituents, same or different, are hydrogen atoms,  $C_1$ - $C_{20}$ -alkyl,  $C_3$ - $C_{20}$ -cycloalkyl,  $C_6$ - $C_{20}$ -aryl,  $C_7$ - $C_{20}$ -alkylaryl or  $C_7$ - $C_{20}$ -arylalkyl, optionally containing silicon or germanium atoms, and j ranges from 0 to 1, being also a non-integer number.

7. (Previously amended) The process according to claim 6, wherein said alumoxane is methylalumoxane (MAO), tetra-(isobutyl)alumoxane (TIBAO), tetra-(2,4,4-trimethyl-pentyl)alumoxane (TIOAO), tetra-(2,3-dimethylbutyl)alumoxane (TDMBAO) or tetra-(2,3,3-trimethylbutyl)alumoxane (TTMBAO).

Claim 8 (Canceled)

9. (Previously amended) The process according to claim 1, wherein the anion  $E^-$  comprises one or more boron atoms.

10. (Previously amended) The process according to claim 1, wherein the process is carried out in the presence of an alpha-olefin selected from the group consisting of propylene, 1-butene, 1-pentene, 1-hexene, 4-methyl-1-pentene, 1-octene, 1-decene and 1-dodecene.

11. (Original) The process according to claim 10, wherein said alpha-olefin is 1-hexene or propylene.

12. (Original) The process according to claim 10, wherein the molar content of alpha-olefin derived units is between 0% and 60%.

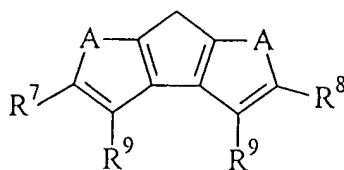
13. (Previously amended) The process according to claim 1, wherein the process is carried out in the presence of a cyclic monomer.

14. (Original) The process according to claim 13, wherein the cyclic comonomer is 5-ethyliden-2-norbornene.

15. (Previously amended) The process according to claim 13, wherein the molar content of the cyclic monomer is between 0 mol% and 30 mol%.

Claims 16-19 (Canceled)

20. (Previously amended) A process for preparing the compound of formula (VII)



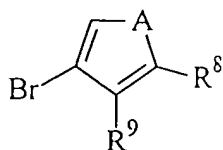
(VII)

wherein A is sulfur (S) or oxygen (O), R<sup>9</sup> is hydrogen, a C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-cycloalkyl, C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkenyl, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-aryl, C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkylaryl, or C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-arylalkyl radical, optionally containing heteroatoms belonging to groups 13 or 15-17 of the Periodic Table of the Elements;

R<sup>7</sup> and R<sup>8</sup> which may be the same as or different from each other, are a C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-cycloalkyl, C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkenyl, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-aryl, C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkylaryl, or C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-arylalkyl radical, optionally containing heteroatoms belonging to groups 13 or 15-17 of the Periodic Table of the Elements;

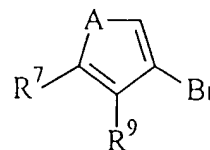
comprising the following steps:

- i) contacting an equimolar mixture of compounds of formulae (XI) and (XII):



(XI)

and



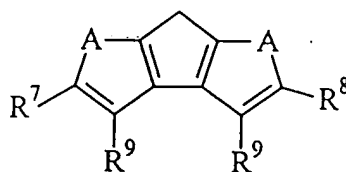
(XII)

- wherein A is sulfur or oxygen,  
with a Lewis acid or a mixture of a Lewis acid and a  
protonic acid;
- ii) treating the thus obtained product from step i) with  
CH<sub>2</sub>O in a molar ratio between said mixture and CH<sub>2</sub>O of a  
range between 10:1 and 1:10;
- iii) contacting the thus obtained product from step ii) with  
a compound selected from an organolithium compound,  
sodium or potassium; and
- iv) contacting the thus obtained product from step iii) with  
an agent selected from the group consisting of copper  
(II) chloride, iodine and Mg/Pd, in order to obtain a  
compound of general formula (VII).

21. (Previously amended) The process according to claim 20, wherein the Lewis acid is selected from the group consisting of zinc dichloride, cadmium dichloride, mercury dichloride, tin tetrachloride, trifluoroborane, zirconium tetrachloride, and titanium tetrachloride.

Claim 22 (Canceled)

23. (Previously amended) A process for preparing the compound of formula (VII)



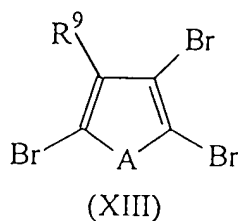
(VII)

wherein A is sulfur (S) or oxygen (O), R<sup>9</sup> is hydrogen, a C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-cycloalkyl, C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkenyl, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-aryl, C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkylaryl, or C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-arylalkyl radical, optionally containing heteroatoms belonging to groups 13 or 15-17 of the Periodic Table of the Elements;

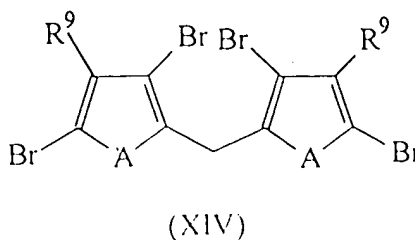
R and R<sup>e</sup> which may be the same as or different from each other, are a C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-cycloalkyl, C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkenyl, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-aryl, C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkylaryl, or C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-arylalkyl radical, optionally containing heteroatoms belonging to groups 13 or 15-17 of the Periodic Table of the Elements;

comprising the following steps:

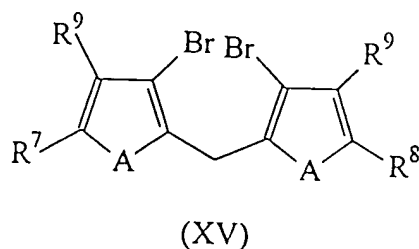
- i) contacting a compound of formula (XIII):



with a base selected from an organolithium compound, sodium or potassium; treating with a formic ester, wherein the molar ratio between said ester and the compound of formula (XIII) is at least 1:2, and subsequently treating the obtained product with a reducing agent in order to obtain a compound of formula (XIV):



- ii) contacting the compound of formula (XIV) with a base selected from an organolithium compound, sodium or potassium and subsequently treating the dimetallated compound with an alkylating agent to obtain the compound of formula (XV);

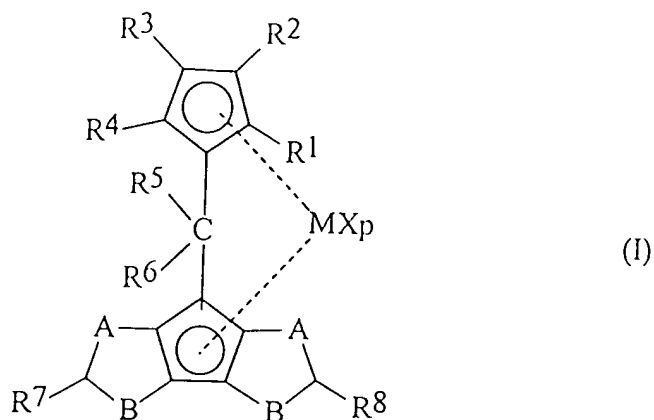


and

- iii) contacting the alkylated compound obtained by step ii) with a coupling agent selected from the group consisting of copper (II) chloride, iodine and Mg/Pd in order to obtain the compound of formula (VII).

Claim 24 (Canceled)

25. (Currently amended) A metallocene compound of formula (I):



wherein

A and B are selected from sulfur (S), oxygen (O) or CR<sup>9</sup>, R<sup>9</sup> being hydrogen, a C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-cycloalkyl, C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkenyl, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-aryl, C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkylaryl, or C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-arylalkyl radical, optionally containing heteroatoms belonging to groups 13 or 15-17 of the Periodic Table of the Elements, with the proviso that if A is S or O, B is CR<sup>9</sup> or if B is S or O, A is CR<sup>9</sup>, and A and B cannot simultaneously be CR<sup>9</sup>;

R<sup>1</sup>, R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>4</sup>, R<sup>5</sup>, R<sup>6</sup>, R<sup>7</sup>, and R<sup>8</sup> which may be the same as or different from each other, are hydrogen, a C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-cycloalkyl, C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkenyl, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-aryl, C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkylaryl, or

C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-arylalkyl radical, optionally containing heteroatoms belonging to groups 13 or 15-17 of the Periodic Table of the Elements, and at least two adjacent substituents R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>3</sup> and R<sup>4</sup>, or R<sup>5</sup> and R<sup>6</sup> can form a ring comprising 4 to 8 atoms; ~~and where at least one of R<sup>1</sup>, R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>4</sup>, R<sup>5</sup> and R<sup>6</sup> is not hydrogen;~~

M is an atom of a transition metal from group 3, 4, 5, 6 or the lanthanide or actinide groups in the Periodic Table of the Elements,

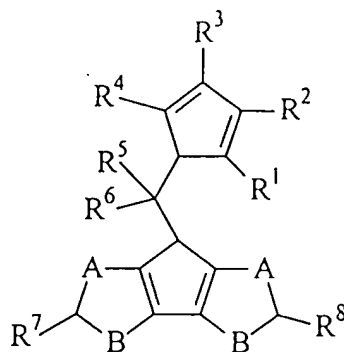
X, which may be the same as or different from each other, is hydrogen, halogen atom, a R<sup>10</sup>, OR<sup>10</sup>, OSO<sub>2</sub>CF<sub>3</sub>, OCOR<sup>10</sup>, SR<sup>10</sup>, NR<sup>10</sup><sub>2</sub> or PR<sup>10</sup><sub>2</sub> group, wherein the substituents R<sup>10</sup> are hydrogen, a C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-cycloalkyl, C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkenyl, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-aryl, C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkylaryl, or C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-arylalkyl radical, optionally containing heteroatoms belonging to groups 13 or 15-17 of the Periodic Table of the Elements;

p is an integer of from 1 to 3, being equal to the oxidation state of the metal M minus 2;

and wherein the rings containing A and B have a double bond in the allowed position having an aromatic character; and

with the proviso that at least one of R<sup>7</sup> and R<sup>8</sup> is not hydrogen.

26. (Currently amended) A ligand of formula (II):



(II)

or its double bond isomers,

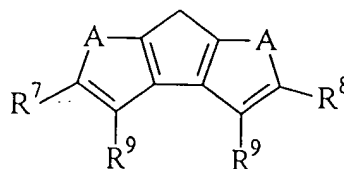
wherein the rings containing A and B have double bonds in any of the allowed positions, having an aromatic character and

A and B are selected from sulfur (S), oxygen (O) or CR<sup>9</sup>, R<sup>9</sup> being hydrogen, a C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-cycloalkyl, C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkenyl, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-aryl, C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkylaryl, or C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-arylalkyl radical, optionally containing heteroatoms belonging to groups 13 or 15-17 of the Periodic Table of the Elements, with the proviso that if A is S or O, B is CR<sup>9</sup> or if B is S or O, A is CR<sup>9</sup>, and A and B cannot simultaneously be CR<sup>9</sup>;

R<sup>1</sup>, R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>4</sup>, R<sup>5</sup>, R<sup>6</sup>, R<sup>7</sup>, and R<sup>8</sup> which may be the same as or different from each other, are hydrogen, a C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-cycloalkyl, C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkenyl, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-aryl, C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkylaryl, or

C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-arylalkyl radical, optionally containing heteroatoms belonging to groups 13 or 15-17 of the Periodic Table of the Elements, and at least two adjacent substituents R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>3</sup> and R<sup>4</sup>, or R<sup>5</sup> and R<sup>6</sup> can form a ring comprising 4 to 8 atoms ~~and wherein at least one of the substituents R<sup>1</sup>, R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>4</sup>, R<sup>5</sup>, and R<sup>6</sup> is not hydrogen;~~  
with the proviso that at least one of R<sup>7</sup> and R<sup>8</sup> is not hydrogen.

27. (Previously amended) A process for preparing the compound of formula (VII)

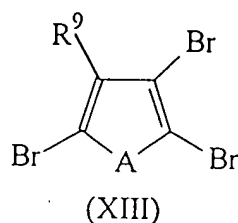


(VII)

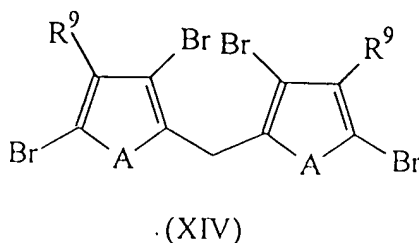
wherein A is sulfur (S) or oxygen (O), R<sup>9</sup> is hydrogen, a C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-cycloalkyl, C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkenyl, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-aryl, C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-alkylaryl, or C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>-arylalkyl radical, optionally containing heteroatoms belonging to groups 13 or 15-17 of the Periodic Table of the Elements;

$R^7$  and  $R^8$  which may be the same as or different from each other, are a  $C_1$ - $C_{20}$ -alkyl,  $C_1$ - $C_{20}$ -cycloalkyl,  $C_2$ - $C_{20}$ -alkenyl,  $C_6$ - $C_{20}$ -aryl,  $C_7$ - $C_{20}$ -alkylaryl, or  $C_7$ - $C_{20}$ -arylalkyl radical, optionally containing heteroatoms belonging to groups 13 or 15-17 of the Periodic Table of the Elements;  
comprising the following steps:

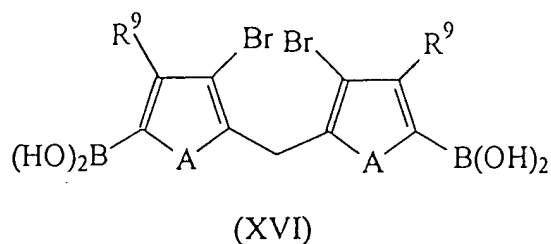
i) contacting a compound of formula (XIII):



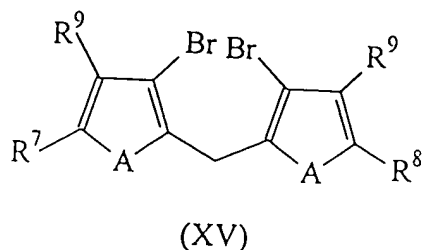
with a base selected from an organolithium compound, sodium or potassium; treating with a formic ester, wherein the molar ratio between said ester and the compound of formula (XIII) is at least 1:2, and subsequently treating the obtained product with a reducing agent in order to obtain a compound of formula (XIV):



- ii) contacting the compound of formula (XIV) with a base selected from an organolithium compound, sodium or potassium and subsequently treating the dimetallated compound with an ester of boric acid and a protonating agent in order to obtain the compound of formula (XVI):



and subsequently contacting with a mixture of an alkylating agent in the presence of an transition metal complex compound for obtaining the compound of formula (XV);



and

- iii) contacting the alkylated compound obtained by step ii) with a coupling agent selected from the group consisting of copper (II) chloride, iodine and Mg/Pd in order to obtain the compound of formula (VII).